

# **Zasada Sherlocka Holmesa** **(A Look at the Sound and Film History of Sherlock Holmes in Poland)**

by  
Howard 'Prince Beast' Ostrom  
and dedicated to Zuzanna, the Polish Princess Belle

On Twitter, I read the comment, "Growing up Poland, we don't have Sherlock Holmes, we have Ojciec Mateusz". Well my tweeting friend, perhaps you see but you do not observe. The character of Sherlock Holmes is everywhere, and especially flourishing in Poland at the present time, mainly due to the popularity of the recent Guy Richie Sherlock Holmes films, with Robert Downey Jr. as Sherlock Holmes and Jude Law as Dr. Watson, and the BBC TV's "Sherlock" series, with Benedict Cumberbatch as Sherlock Holmes and Martin Freeman as Dr. Watson.



**Ojciec Mateusz**



**Benedict Cumberbatch & Martin Freeman**



**Robert Downey Jr. & Jude Law**

"In Poland you can find Sherlock Pub in Sopot, a Sherlock Holmes Pub, in Bialystok, a Sherlock Holmes Pub & Bistro in Łódź, Benedict Cumberbatch's hand prints in cement, in what I guess would be Krakow's version of Hollywood's Walk of Fame, and you might even find Sherlock Holmes, himself, in Warsaw!



**Sherlock Pub in Sopot, Poland**



**Sherlock Holmes Pub in Bialystok, Poland**



**Sherlock Holmes Pub & Bistro in Łódź, Poland**



**Benedict Cumberbatch in Krakow (2014)**



**Sherlock Holmes in Warsaw by Grzegorz Chudy**

However, these are all relatively speaking newer observations of Sherlock in Poland. Let us explore further back than 2008, and take a look at the sound and film history of Sherlock Holmes in Poland since the introduction of the character to us in “A Study in Scarlet” by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, written in 1886, and making its appearance in print in “Beeton's Christmas Annual” in 1887<sup>1</sup>.

It has been theorized that some of Poland’s proverbs, such as, *zasada Sherlocka Holmesa* ( Sherlock Holmes’s rule), and *morderca/przestępca sprawca zawsze wraca na miejsce zbrodni* (the murderer/criminal returns to the crime), may be the result of the popularity of the American detective films in Poland.<sup>2</sup> If that theory is true, perhaps they can be attributed to the very popular Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce Sherlock Holmes films of the nineteen forties. However, I would theorize that those proverbs go back further than American detective films, since Poland, like many of its European and Asian neighbors has a history with the character of Sherlock Holmes dating back as far as at least 1906. So let’s take a chronological look at Poland’s Sherlock Holmes productions and performers throughout history.

**Alexander Zelwerowicz** may have been the first Polish Sherlock Holmes when he starred in William Gillette’s “Sherlock Holmes “ on stage in 1906-07.<sup>3</sup>



**Alexander Zelwerowicz**

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<sup>1</sup> 1887 the year Zuzanna was born.

<sup>2</sup> The Anglicization of European Lexis edited by Cristiano Furiassi, Virginia Pulcini, Félix González p. 272

<sup>3</sup> <https://polona.pl/item/19709091/0/>



**Kazimierz Kamiński** was one of Poland's earliest Sherlock Holmes performers when he took the stage in “Šerlok Hol’ms” Sherlock Holmes” in 1907.<sup>4</sup>



**Kazimierz Kamiński**

**Tadeusz Zelski** played Sherlock Holmes on stage in Poland in “Scherlock Holmes Pies z Bascerville” in 192?.<sup>5</sup>

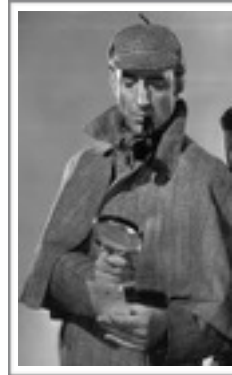
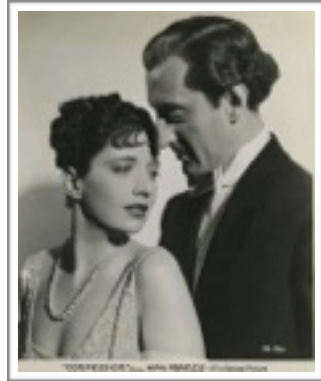


**Tadeusz Zelski**

<sup>4</sup> <https://polona.pl/item/37802096/5/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://polona.pl/item/50949368/0/>

**Basil Rathbone...** wait why is Basil Rathbone, one of the most famous Sherlock Holmes of all-times, being mentioned in an essay on the history of Holmes in Poland? Yes, I know he was a Brit, born in South Africa, and appeared in American films, but I must confess that as my favorite Holmes, I always try to find a place for him. Here is a Polish connection for Rathbone... in the film “Confession” (1937), he played a wicked Polish composer who is shot to death by a wronged women. I know it is a bit of a stretch, but it got Basil in the article didn’t it? :-)



**Basil Rathbone**

**Kazimierz Rudzki** is one of three actors listed as Sherlock Holmes in the stage play “Jajko Kolumba” (“Egg of Columbus”) held at the Krakow Old Theater in 1946.<sup>6</sup>



**Kazimierz Rudzki**

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.encyklopediateatru.pl/przedstawienie/3955/jajko-kolumba>

**Igor Śmiałowski** is one of three actors listed as Sherlock Holmes in the stage play “Jajko Kolumba” (“Egg of Columbus”) held at the Krakow Old Theater in 1946.<sup>7</sup>



**Śmiałowski Igor**

**Józef Dwornicki (1915–1968)** is one of three actors listed as Sherlock Holmes in the stage play “Jajko Kolumba” (“Egg of Columbus”) held at the Krakow Old Theater in 1946.<sup>8</sup>



**Józef Dwornicki**

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.encyklopediateatru.pl/przedstawienie/3955/jajko-kolumba>

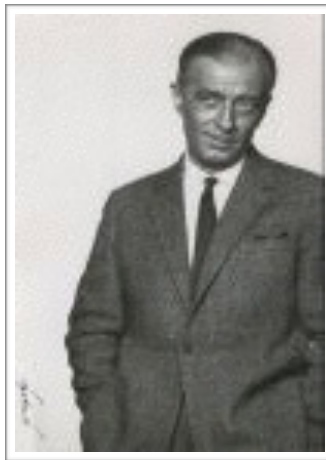
<sup>8</sup> <http://www.encyklopediateatru.pl/przedstawienie/3955/jajko-kolumba>

**Michał Melina** performed as Sherlock Holmes with **Janusz Jaroń** as Dr. Watson in "Watsonie - twój przyjaciel umiera" ("Watson - your friend dies") and, "Pies Baskervill'ów" ("The Hound of the Baskervilles") on Polish Radio Theater in 1955.



**Michał Melina**

**Jan Świderski** was Sherlock Holmes in Polish Radio Theater in "Stadium w szkarłacie" ("A Study in Scarlet") and "Przygoda w Foukles Rath" ("An Adventure in Foukles Rath") in 1956.<sup>9</sup>



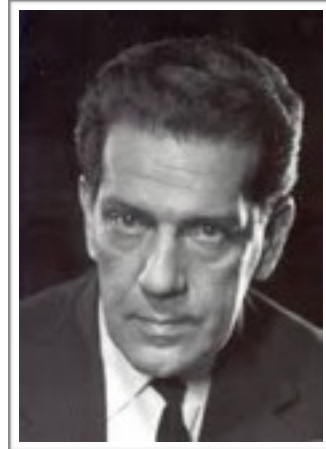
**Jan Świderski**

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.e-teatr.pl/pl/osoby/7130,karieraradio.html>



**Mieczysław Milecki** was the voice of Sherlock Holmes in Polish Radio Theater's "Sherlock Holmes, The Woman and The Missing Doctor" ("kobieta i zaginiony lekarz") in 1957, and in "Mrs. Holmes in Action" ("Pani Holmes w akcji") in 1958.



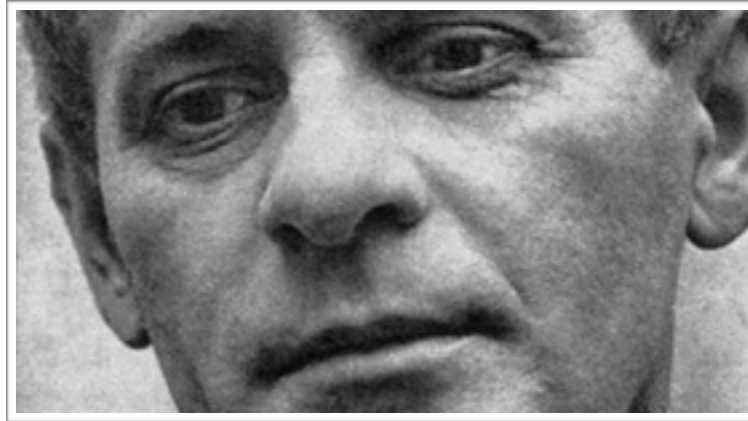
**Mieczysław Milecki**

**Tadeusz Białoszczyński** appeared as Sherlock Holmes with **Stanisław Libner** as Dr. Watson in "Dolina Strachu" a Polish TV adaptation of Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Valley of Fear". It appeared as 2 episodes airing, June 7 & Aug. 30, 1958.



**Tadeusz Białoszczyński**

**Tadeusz Łomnicki** played Sherlock Holmes, with **Tadeusz Woźniak** as Dr. Watson, in Polish Radio Theater's "Zagadka Brook Street" ("Brook Street Riddle") in 1959.



**Tadeusz Łomnicki**

**Mieczysław Pawlikowski** played Sherlock Holmes with **Edmund Fidler** as Dr. Watson in Polish Radio Theater's "Umbrella Worshiper" ("Czciciel parasola") in 1965.



**Mieczysław Pawlikowski**

Listen to "Czciciel parasola" at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhK6Ypc\\_SS0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhK6Ypc_SS0)

**Bronisław Pawlik** played Sherlock Holmes with **Czesław Roszkowski** as Dr. Watson in Polish Radio Theater's "Narzeczoną panną Mary" ("Bride of Mary") in 1966.



**Bronisław Pawlik**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXPXlGJKBm4>

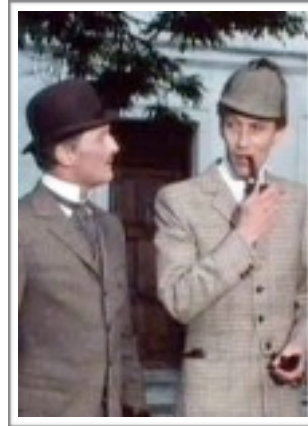
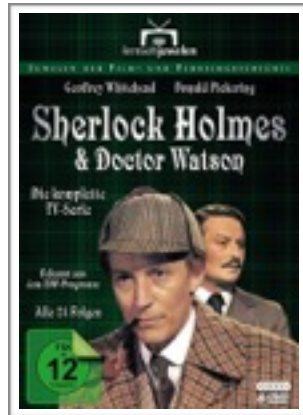
**Piotr Fronczewski** voiced Sherlock Holmes, with **Jerzy Tkaczyk** as Dr. Watson, on Polish Radio Theater in "Zabójstwo przy moście" ("Murder on the Bridge") 1976, "Przygoda w hrabstwie Surrey" ("Surrey County Adventure"), "Fotografia Arthur Conan Doyle" ("Arthur Conan Doyle Photography") 1977, "Przygody Sherlocka Holmesa" ("The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes") in 1977-78, "Sześć popiersi cesarza" ("Six Busts of the Emperor"), "Morderstwo przy Park Lane" ("Murder at Park Lane"), "Psy się nie mylą" ("Dogs do not mistake"), "Trzej studenci" ("Three students"), "Tragiczny romans" ("Tragic romance") 1978, "Srebrna gwiazda" ("Silver Blaze"), "Tajemnicza lokatorka" ("The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger"), "Tańczące sylwetki" ("Dancing Silhouettes"), "Pięć pestek pomarańczy" ("The Five Orange Pips"), "Przedsiębiorca budowlany z Norwood" ("The Norwood Builder") in 1979.



**Piotr Fronczewski**

Listen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0-aLzxNVsU&t=44s>

The 1979/80 TV series 'Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson' consisting of 24 stories produced by Sheldon Reynolds and was filmed in Poland. It starred **Geoffrey Whitehead** as Sherlock Holmes and **Donald Pickering** as Dr. Watson. This was Reynolds's second foray into Sherlock Holmes for TV. Some episodes used the same script as Reynolds's earlier 1954/55 series with Ronald Howard as Sherlock Holmes. The series is largely unknown and has only been released officially on DVD in Italy and Germany.



### Geoffrey Whitehead and Donald Pickering

Geoffrey Whitehead 'Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson' episodes on YouTube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uKHaCBsqKE&list=PLcvObjGQpCd2hBOM2zSBktJTkFofIKguK>

“A series of 24 30-minute programs, produced by Sheldon Reynolds. Distributed by American International Television and first broadcast in 1980. Cast: Geoffrey Whitehead (Sherlock Holmes), Donald Pickering (Doctor Watson). The series was first announced in 1978 by Andrea Reynolds (Fluffy Ash, summer 1978). Andrea Reynolds said in 1979 that "owning all the rights to Arthur Conan Doyle's work is 'like owning an oil well'" (Women's Wear Daily, Feb. 23, 1979), and the series was filmed in Poland and England. The series credits state that it was a co-production by TVP Półtel and the Sheldon Reynolds Organization. According to 'The Poles', by Stewart Steven (New York: Macmillan, 1982, p. 31), "A British TV company went into a co-partnership deal, in theory with Polish TV but in fact with Szczepanski, to make, of all things a Sherlock Holmes movie with British actors. The film has never been seen, but a wood-and-papier-mache Baker Street still exists, looking somewhat forlorn in the middle of a Warsaw TV movie lot." According to Jean G. Weidner, Maciej Szczepanski was head of Poland's radio and TV system until about the end of 1980, when he was ousted for corruption after Gierek was run out of office. [Andrea was arrested and jailed in Poland, and Sheldon (who was in London) spent a few days arranging for her release] ['Worst mistake I ever made,' he once told me] [He also has said that his worst mistake was introducing Andrea to his friend Claus von Bulow]"<sup>10</sup>

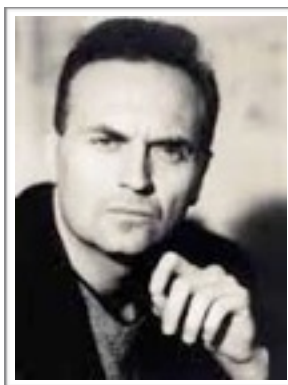
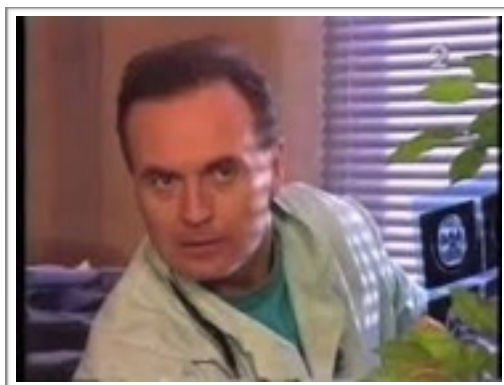
<sup>10</sup> Blau, Peter files

**Jan Matyjaszkiewicz** played Sherlock Holmes, with no Watson listed, in Polish Radio Theater's "Skradziony diament" ("Stolen Diamond") in 1985.



**Jan Matyjaszkiewicz**

**2003 - Krzysztof Stawowy** (1963 - ) directed and read an audio version of "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" for Radio Krakow in 2003.



**Krzysztof Stawowy**

As Stawowy puts it, "In 2003 I directed and read an audio book version of "Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" by A. Conan - Doyle. It was difficult, but rewarding. It gave me a lot of satisfaction. I like directing soundtracks."<sup>11</sup>

His recordings are at: [http://chomikuj.pl/poldzio.p/Sherlock+Holmes/Arthur+Conan+Doyle+-+Przygody+Sherlocka+Holmesa+\(Stawowy\),2](http://chomikuj.pl/poldzio.p/Sherlock+Holmes/Arthur+Conan+Doyle+-+Przygody+Sherlocka+Holmesa+(Stawowy),2)

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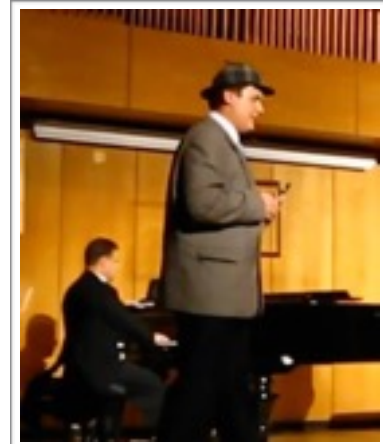
<sup>11</sup> [http://www.stawowy.pl/cv\\_ang.html](http://www.stawowy.pl/cv_ang.html)





On 5 and 12 November 2007, in the Year of Karol Szymanowski (125th birthday and the 70th anniversary of death), the Krakow Opera in cooperation with the Polish Music Publishing House held the world premiere of Karol Szymanowski's opera "Lottery for Husbands or the Bride No. 69" in the J. Slowacki Theater.. The Krakow Opera will be the first stage production in Poland and in the world, it opened the third Festival of Polish Music. Jan Nosal played Sherlock Holmes with Stanisław Knapik as Dr. Watson. Another operetta performance took place on December 9, 2007, in which Witold Wrona played Sherlock Holmes, with Stanisław Knapik returning as Dr. Watson.<sup>12</sup>

**Jan Nosal** performed as Sherlock Holmes, as the guest at an engagement party, in the stage operetta "Lottery for Husbands, or Fiancee No. 69" ("Loteria na mężów, czyli Narzeczoną nr 69") in 2007.<sup>13</sup>

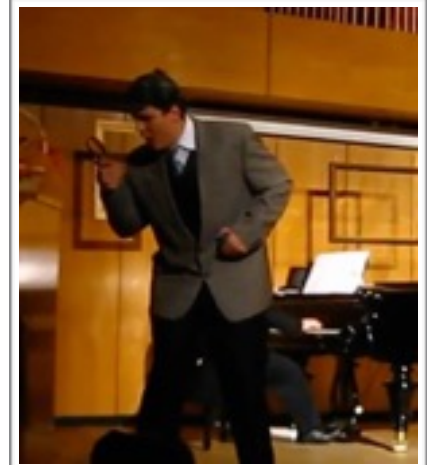


### Jan Nosal

Watch "Loteria na mężów, czyli Narzeczoną nr 69" at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vMpYwK3-9s>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.rmflclassic.pl/informacje/Muzyka,10/Swiatowa-prapremiera-operetki-Karola-Szymanowskiego-Loteria-na-mezow-czyli-Narzeczony-nr-69,11119.html>

**Witold Wrona** also performed as Sherlock Holmes, as the guest at an engagement party, in the stage operetta “Lottery for Husbands, or Fiancee No. 69” (“Loteria na mężów, czyli Narzeczony nr 69”) in 2007.



**Witold Wrona**

**Misiek Koterski** played Sherlock Holmes with **Krzysztof Janczar** as Dr. Watson on “The Misiek Koterski Show” on Polish TV in 2008.



**Misiek Koterski and Krzysztof Janczar**

View this episode of “The Misiek Koterski Show” at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h0ETsvP9t2E>

In researching I often search the subject on Twitter or Facebook, which is where I spotted this comment to look into. Growing up Polish, we don't have Sherlock Holmes, we have Ojciec Mateusz.

**Artur Żmijewski** played Ojciec Mateusz (Father Matthew) in a Polish television series. “Ojciec Mateusz' is about the adventures of a Roman Catholic priest who, after returning from a mission to Belarus, is sent to work in a small parish. As a pastor, together with a friendly policeman, he solves mysteries and gives help to his parishioners, as well as all those who are in need. He has a talent in solving crimes, which leads him to delve into many mysteries. He is extremely brilliant, intelligent and perceptive. Sound familiar, not really Sherlock Holmes but very close. Actually, ‘Ojciec Mateusz' is a Polish version of the Italian detective series Don Matteo broadcast in Italy and also in Poland by TVP1, TV Puls, Religia.tv and AXN Crime. The show is set in Sandomierz, although scenes in the church are recorded in Glinianka near Otwock, the vicarage in Anin in Warsaw, and the office of the bishop is filmed in the Nieborów Palace. In the fourth series, some episodes take place outside of Sandomierz, including in Kielce, Bałtów, Krzyżtopór, Busko-Zdrój and Opatów, as well as Ćmielów, Wąchock and Zalew Sielpia. The pilot episode was aired on November 11, 2008 and ran through 2016..”<sup>14</sup>



**The Solitary Cyclist Ojciec Mateusz**



**Artur Żmijewski**

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<sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ojciec\\_Mateusz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ojciec_Mateusz)

**Tomasz Gwincinski** played ‘Rabbi, Sherlock’ in “Sherlock Holmes i Ludzie Jutra” (Sherlock Holmes and the People of Tomorrow) a 2014 Polish independent film. “According to Joanna Gwincinska (5 august 2014): The film itself is highly metaphorical and is not based on any book of Sir Conan Doyle. I took only the name of Sherlock and used it in a title. The film and the script, which I wrote, is totally my own author vision. However, ‘Rabbi Sherlock’ is a character in the movie, but not a main one. Nowadays in Poland people are leading an investigation about the Smolensk catastrophe and the film relates to that. We are fans of Sherlock Holmes and that is why the director and the author of the script wanted Sherlock to be a part of it.”<sup>15</sup>



**Sherlock Holmes and the People of Tomorrow**



**Tomasz Gwincinski**

Sherlock Holmes i Ludzie Jutra film trailer  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcYy41ID3LI>

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<sup>15</sup> [https://www.arthur-conan-doyle.com/index.php?title=Sherlock\\_Holmes\\_i\\_Ludzie\\_Jutra](https://www.arthur-conan-doyle.com/index.php?title=Sherlock_Holmes_i_Ludzie_Jutra)

**Jakub Skrzypczak** has the videos “Kartoteki Sherlocka Holmesa: Holmes kontra Poirot” (Sherlock Holmes File: Holmes vs. Poirot), “Kartoteki Sherlocka Holmesa Ubiór Holmesa”, “Pokemon Go Poznań Sherlock Holmes i Cytadela” and “Zabójstwo na East Endzie” on Youtube. He tells me this about himself, “My passion about Sherlock Holmes started in 2005 when I played ‘Sherlock Holmes and The Silver Earring’ game. It was my first contact with this character. When I was playing, one of Polish publishing houses published the TV series from eighties. I was fascinated! I already knew Sherlock Holmes' cases because in the meantime I had read Conan Doyle's novels. Then, in Youtube era, I got an idea to publish videos about my favorite character. I did it - at the beginning I was recording let's play series, then viewers asked me to create some trivia videos - this request was the basis for my 'Sherlock Holmes's files'. I liked it even though there weren't many views. Then, on behalf of organizers of Sherlockon, the first Polish event dedicated to Sherlock Holmes, I was asked to help in this project. I couldn't take part, because of my personal circumstances, but I have written an article to ‘Baker Street 221b’ magazine.”<sup>16</sup> You can find it here: <http://imgur.com/a/7yoCT>



**Jakub Skrzypczak**

**Video links:**

“Kartoteki Sherlocka Holmesa: Holmes kontra Poirot” at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbP2gl6MPig>

“Pokemon Go Poznań Sherlock Holmes i Cytadela” at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-SwJhnnidj4>

Kartoteki Sherlocka Holmesa Ubiór Holmesa at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQBwIpkXppo>

“Zabójstwo na East Endzie” at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmfulJtYnv8>

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<sup>16</sup> Personel message from Jakub



**Marek Gajewski** played Sherlock Holmes on stage in a sketch “Sherlock... czyli Kabaret Trzecia Strona Medalu” 2016-2017. “Sherlock... Cabaret Third Party Medal” took place in the Center of Culture and Promotion, in Michałowice 19 March 2017. It features the melody from Pink Panther (perhaps the most famous detective melody in cinema history).



**Marek Gajewski**

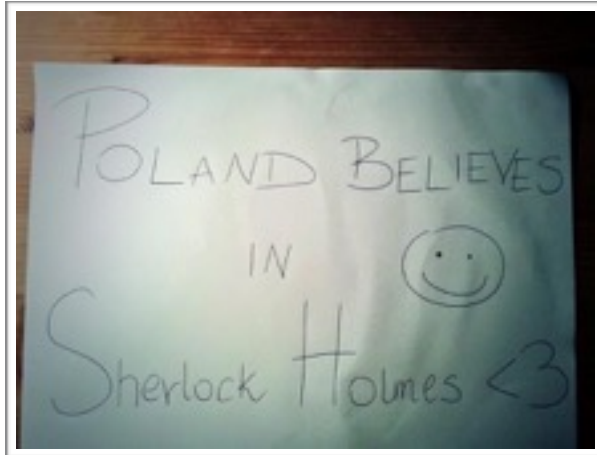
It can be viewed on Youtube at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n\\_qyv\\_7\\_ojQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_qyv_7_ojQ)

It seems this performance is not a full play but only a sketch with no specific title.

Here is another performance during a festival :  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcVuFJna5QI>

Ojciec Mateusz in Poland, Adrian Monk, Hemlock Jones in the United States, William Murdoch in Canada, Erast Fandorin in Russia, Solar Pons, Sexton Blake, Father Brown in Great Britain, Kogoro Akechi, Sherlock Hound, Jimmy Kudo Detective Conan in Japan, Harry Dickson in Germany, Belgium, Herlock Sholmes in France, William Of Baskerville in Italy, Samrat TilakDhari, Jagga Jasoos in India, and hundreds of other clones around the world, are living proof that the original Sherlock Holmes is often imitated but never duplicated. Poland, like most countries has a long and perhaps little known history of Sherlock Holmes which this paper is dedicated to revealing and making you proud of. So to friend Miss Jessie's girl and all Sherlockians, this is what I have. More will be added as it is discovered, and feel free to inform me of findings you may make, or have already of Sherlock Holmes' history in sound and film in Poland, so revisions or corrects may be made.

Never forget Zuza, not just I Believe in Sherlock Holmes.



Poland and Krakow believe in Sherlock too!

I may have missed HER - but I can't see a female Pole playing Holmes in the essay - is this a pleasure we yet await? Perhaps we will see Zuzanna in that role one day, on a Krakow stage, I'd be happy to be her Boswell.

### **The End**

(well almost except there is an addendum)

### **Addendum**

### **“Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Krakow Litterbugs”**



**Do you remember?**

## Sherlock Holmes will track down the trash offenders in Krakow!

"On the streets of Krakow there are mysterious billboards with a smoking pipe Sherlock Holmes. To use the image of the famous detective in the educational campaign admitted MPO. Billboards with Holmes looking at pedestrians and asking "Do you remember?" appeared in 89 places. The purpose of the campaign is to remind residents that the litter is bad. And why is Sherlock Holmes buried in rubbish? "In this campaign we could use a policeman or city guard, but that's not the point to frighten people with mandates," says Wiktor Kammer of Red Star Media, who prepared the campaign and remarks that littering the streets and sidewalks is a misdemeanor. - We use Sherlock Holmes characters, who are known for tracking down crimes, solving criminals and thereby causing perpetrators of malpractice awaiting unpleasant consequences."<sup>17</sup>



Krakow Sherlock Holmes Billboard #1



Krakow Sherlock Holmes Billboard #2

<sup>17</sup> <http://krakow.wyborcza.pl/krakow>

1,44425,17080269,Sherlock\_Holmes\_będzie\_tropił\_smieciących\_w\_Krakowie.html



**Krakow Sherlock Holmes Billboard #3**

And now the time has come for the final curtain. Be sure to go out and pick-up a copy of any of the Doyle's 56 short stories or 4 novels about Sherlock Holmes, light that pipe up, and enjoy a good read.



**Cover design by Bohdan Bocianowski  
 “The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes”  
 Warsaw: Państwowe wydawnictwo Iskry, 1956.**





**"Śledztwa Sherlocka Holmesa"**  
**"Sherlock Holmes Investigations"**

**The End**